To the Ministers and Elders of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America:-

Men and Brethren:

The apparent approval by the San Francisco Assembly of the recommendation of the Thompson Committee on Princeton Seminary that the management of the institution be transferred from the Board of Directors as now constituted to a new board, in which the present majority of the Board may be a minority, and the present minority a majority, together with the certainty that this matter will be presented in some form to the General Assembly of 1928, impels the undersigned, comprising a majority of the present Board of Directors, to set forth briefly before the Church conditions in the Seminary as they see them, the true remedy for such of them as require a remedy, and the appalling disaster to the cause of Evangelical religion and Christian scholarship which would be accomplished by the contemplated revolution.

Princeton Seminary is an unincorporated institution organized by the General Assembly of 1811 on a certain definite "Plan",(1) which, we are advised, constitutes a contract with all persons contributing funds to or for the use of the institution, and which can only be amended in a way specified in the Plan itself -- namely, by the proposal of the particular amendment in one Assembly and the passage of that specific amendment either unanimously by the same Assembly, or by majority vote by the next succeeding Assembly.(2)

(1) 2 Presbyterian Digest, pp. 429 et seq.
(2) Plan, Art. I, Sec. 3, 2 Presbyterian Digest, p. 431.

According to that Plan the "control" of the institution is to be vested in a Board of Directors,[3] who were originally to be elected by the General Assembly,[4] but who, by an amendment adopted in 1870 upon the reunion of the Old and New Schools, and at a time when fears were prevalent lest the infusion of the New School element into the Assembly might jeopardize the independence of a stalwart Old-School Seminary, are chosen by the Board itself, subject only to the right of veto by the next succeeding Assembly.[5]

The property and funds of the Seminary were at first held by individual trustees. According to the original Plan they were to be "in the hands of such corporation or disposed of for safe keeping and improvement, in such other manner as the General Assembly shall direct".[6] Ten years later, in 1821, pursuant to this power, the Assembly authorized the Directors in their discretion to obtain a charter for a corporation to act as trustee in the place of the individual trustees.[7] Accordingly, the Legislature of New Jersey in the following year passed "an act for incorporating the Trustees of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church at Princeton".[8] This charter, however, was declined by the General Assembly of 1823, because the Legislature reserved the right to amend or repeal it at pleasure.[9] A supplementary act of the legislature was obtained the next year providing for the continuance of the trust for the benefit of the Seminary in individual hands in case this power should be exercised;[10] and thereupon the charter as thus amended was accepted by the General Assembly.[11] No change, however, was made in

(3) Art. I, sec. 2 (2 Presbyterian Digest p. 431) and Art. III, sec. 12 (2 Presbyterian Digest, p. 434)

(4) 2 Presbyterian Digest, p. 431 note 3.

(5) 2 Presbyterian Digest, p. 432 note 6.

(6) 2 Presbyterian Digest, p. 442, note 51.

(7) 2 Presbyterian Digest, p. 445.

(8) 2 Presbyterian Digest, pp. 445 and 447.

(9) 2 Presbyterian Digest, pp. 445-6.

(10) 2 Presbyterian Digest, p. 449.

(11) 2 Presbyterian Digest, p. 446.

the Plan.[12] The only effect was that the trustees, instead of being a group of individuals subject to change by death or otherwise, enjoyed henceforth by civil law the continuity of incorporation. The Board of Directors continued, as before, the sole governing body of the Seminary.

Fully sensible of the responsibility thus placed upon them by the Church, and of the trust reposed in them by individual donors, the present members of the Board of Directors and their distinguished predecessors have to the best of their ability discharged the important duty of guiding the destinies of this great institution of sacred learning. Without self-flattery, we think we can say that the manner in which that duty has been performed deserves praise rather than censure from the Church. A faculty has been secured and maintained which is second to none in learning and ability, and in zeal and effectiveness in defense of the fundamental facts of our religion and of the doctrines of the Reformed Faith as embodied in the Westminster Confession, even at a time when those facts are widely doubted or denied, and those doctrines disparaged, sometimes by men of high position in this and other Evangelical Churches. Its fame has gone abroad far beyond the limits of our own Church, and its influence is felt to the remotest corners of the earth.

The Plan of a Seminary under the control of the Board of Directors, with the custody and investment of its funds under the management of an incorporated trustee, has worked well for over a

(12) Until 1870, there was no reference to the Trustees in the Plan other than the general provision that the funds should be deposited for safe-keeping in the hands of such corporation or persons as the General Assembly should direct. In 1824, upon the acceptance of the charter, the General Assembly appointed a committee to report what changes should be made in the Plan in consequence of the charter (2 Presbyterian Digest p. 446), but presumably it was concluded that no changes were necessary. At any rate, none was made. In 1870, by an amendment to the Plan, it was provided that the Directors might exercise all control of funds previously exercised by the General Assembly, but that all matters relating to finance, such as fixing the salaries of professors and aid to students, should be submitted to the Trustees for their approval. 2 Presbyterian Digest pp. 441-2.

hundred years. The Board of Directors, and the Faculty selected by them, labored with singleness of purpose and harmony of spirit -- a Faculty, too, containing all the members of the majority upon whom the Thompson Report would lay the charge of factiousness[13] -- until the inauguration of President Stevenson in 1914. The unwillingness of the President to recognize the authority of a majority of his colleagues on the Faculty in matters committed to their discretion gradually led to the formation of more or less definite parties -- a minority now composed of President Stevenson and Dr. Charles R. Erdman, with the adhesion at times of Dr. J. Ritchie Smith and Dr. Fred. W. Loetscher, and a majority composed of the other members of the Faculty -- Dr. W. Brenton Greene, Dr. Geerhardus Vos, Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, Dr. Wm. Park Armstrong, Dr. Caspar Wistar Hodge, Dr. J. Gresham Machen and Dr. Oswald T. Allis. Soon the same cause produced a similar division in the Board of Directors -- a minority composed of President Stevenson and his followers, and a majority composed of the other members of the Board.

It is idle within the limits of this paper to attempt to set forth in detail the circumstances leading up to this condition. We believe that the majority of the Board and the majority of the Faculty have been in the main right, and the minority wrong. At all events, certain it is that the lack of harmony can be remedied very simply by the resignation of President Stevenson. Is there any reason to suppose that a faculty which lived in harmony before President Stevenson's advent could not again

(13) Two of the members of the majority of the present Faculty were, before the coming of President Stevenson, "instructors" and not technically members of the faculty, but they were working in entire harmony with all the Faculty and with Dr. Francis L. Patton, then president.

live in harmony if he should leave? Is there any reason to suppose that a Board of Directors which worked harmoniously until the coming of President Stevenson could not resume the same relations if he should depart?

The gravamen of the charge made against us is that a majority of the Faculty which we and our predecessors have selected and which we support and are proud of, have been guilty of excessive zeal in defense of the factual basis of Christianity including the Virgin Birth and Bodily Resurrection of our Lord, the infallibility of theScriptures, the vicarious atonement, and the other fundamental doctrines of the Confession of Faith. It is said that this excessive zeal led certain members of the Faculty, in violation of the proprieties of inter-professorial relations, to oppose one of their colleagues, Dr. Charles R. Erdman, for the moderatorship of the General Assembly, successfully in 1924 when Dr. Clarence R. MacCartney was elected, and unsuccessfully in 1925. Certainly a majority of the members of the Faculty did oppose the election of Dr. Erdman; but they did so conscientiously, believing that his election would encourage and strengthen the Modernist element in the Church and correspondingly weaken those who still stand by the faith of our fathers -- results which have actually happened. We are unable to see that a presbyter can be justly criticized for acting according to his conscience in such a matter, even though he is thereby required to oppose one of his professorial colleagues. But at worst, these members of the faculty were guilty of a breach of professorial etiquette. In order to punish a breach of

etiquette, is the Church of the living God prepared to take the control of a great Seminary out of the hands of those who have made it a thorn in the side of every Modernist in the land?

Secondly, it is charged that a majority of the members of the faculty in their zeal for the purity of the faith, were guilty of discourtesy to President Stevenson by taking from him the power to appoint committees.(14) Here too, it is not charged that the majority of the Faculty exceeded their lawful powers, but only that they were guilty of a breach of etiquette. What a pitiful excuse such a fault would be for remodelling in this time of storm and stress the Seminary which most strongly and persistently has defended the truth of the Scriptures against the assaults of a rationalistic criticism! But in fact there was not even a breach of etiquette. In recent years, other bodies have taken from a presiding officer the power to appoint committees, and nobody has charged that the measure involved any discourtesy to him. Moreover, President Stevenson by his efforts to thwart the majority of the Faculty certainly brought the slight, if such it be, upon himself. The president of a Seminary, like the president of the United States, is an executive officer, and his duty is to carry out the policy of the legislative body.(15) If he refuses to do so, -- for example, if he leaves the selection of the preachers at the Seminary Chapel tó a Committee containing not one single member of the majority group of the Faculty -- he surely can not complain that the legislativebody exercises its lawful powers.

(14) Dr. Erdman was a member of the Committee on Revision of Faculty Commission which unanimously, Dr. Erdman concurring, recommended the action; and President Stevenson himself did not object. Typewritten testimony before Thompson Committee, pp. 195, 201.

(15) Even the Report of the Thompson Committee recognizes this by declaring (p. 10):-

> "The true position of an executive and administrative officer is to represent the faculty and student body on the one side, and on the other side to be the official means of communication from the governing body."

He certainly can not properly perform these functions unless heis in full sympathy with a majority of the faculty and with a majority of the board of directors.

Thirdly, it is charged that a majority of the Faculty were again guilty of discourtesy to Dr. Erdman in replacing him, in consequence of a movement initiated by the students, by Dr. Robert Dick Wilson in the position of student adviser.(16) Can any person acquire a vested right to such an office? Can any member of a faculty insist that the rules of politeness require that he shall hold such a post for life? The Board of Directors felt that if there was any discourtesy to anybody in this incident, the discourtesy was on the part of Dr. Erdman to his colleagues in continuing to hold such a position after it was evident that a majority of the Faculty would prefer somebody else. But if you grant that the majority of the Faculty were guilty of a breach of etiquette, is that a reason for revolutionizing the Seminary?

We pass over the trivial -- we had almost said ridiculous -- charges brought by Dr. Thompson's Committee against individual members of the Faculty. For example, Dr. Machen is criticized because he is now reported by President Stevenson to have said, years ago, in the privacy of a Faculty meeting, that in his judgment the late Dr. John D. Davis was not qualified to lecture on systematic theology. Is that any reflection upon a distinguished scholar in oriental literature? Dr. Machen himself has deservedly an international reputation as a Greek scholar and Christian apologist, but would it be any reflection upon him to say that he is not qualified to lecture on Hebrew?

(16) It is at least doubtful whether the post of "student adviser" was a Faculty appointment at all, and whether therefore the action of the students alone was not effective.

We do not claim infallibility either for ourselves or for the majority of the Faculty. Doubtless each of us has made many mistakes. Perhaps, -- though surely all unwittingly -- we have not always exercised the Christian charity and consideration for our brethren and their opinions that we ought; but if so, certainly we have had no monopoly of such faults. When has any one of us, or any of the majority of the faculty ever charged one of our opponents with "malicious falsehood", as a leader of the minority of the faculty in the hearings before the Thompson Committee charged one of his colleagues?(17) When has any of us, or any of the majority of the faculty, ever charged any of the adverse faction with "unkindness, suspicion, bitterness and intolerance"?(18) When has any of us, or any member of the majority of the faculty, ever accused one of his opponents of being "temperamentally defective", "bitter and harsh in his judgments" and "spiritually unqualified to teach good will to students" -- epithets which on the floor of the General Assembly were applied to Dr. Machen with the support of President Stevenson and Dr. Erdman?

The impropriety of this last charge is aggravated by the fact that it is unjust, and that the member of the Faculty against whom it was preferred -- Dr. Machen -- has won encomuims far and wide, even from theological opponents, as reviews of his works in this country, in Great Britain and in Germany, abundantly testify, for his "truly fine and catholic spirit",(19) his "self-control and good spirit,(20) his "irenic temper",(21) his abstinence from all vituperation"(22) his "urbanity of manner far superior to

(17) Typewritten transcript of Faculty hearings, p. 71. The Thompson Committee omitted this passage from the summary of evidence attached to their printed report.

(18) Letter from Dr. Erdman in Presbyterian Advance, Feb. 12, 1925.

(19) Western Mail, Cardiff (Wales), April 15, 1926.
"Though Princeton is known for its hide-bound orthodoxy, Dr. Machen can not be charged with obscurantism or reactionary sympathies, for he writes with a truly fine and catholic spirit."

(20) Record of Christian Work. Review of "Christianity and Liberalism.
"As a polemic writer, Professor Machen displays the self-control and good spirit of the scholar. One is conscious all the time of a devoted Christian character back of his words."

(21) Homiletic Review, 1924.
"This able work is written in a rather irenic temper and wide purview of matters discussed at length."

(22) Prof. Henry J. Cadbury (Harvard), in the Congregationalist, September 13, 1924.
"He (the modernist) will not hear himself called vituperative names."
The Christian Herald, March 19, 1924.
"His whole attitude in discussing the situation ... carries with it no vituperation."

that of the polemical controversialists opposed to him",[23] and "his dignified freedom from personalities in the treatment of his opponents"![24]

In assessing the blame for such utterances as those of President Stevenson and Dr. Erdman above referred to, it must be borne in mind that with us, and with the majority of the Faculty, the controversy is one of principle and of conscience. Rightly or wrongly, we and they believe that the issue involves the very life of Christianity in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. Necessity is laid upon us. We feel that if we held our peace the very stones would cry out. But President Stevenson and Dr. Erdman never tire of repeating that there is no issue of principle at all, that both parties are equally loyal to the standards of the Church, and that the question is purely one of personalities and of methods of obtaining the same ends![25] A degree of earnestness and vehemence might therefore be pardoned in us which would be inexcusable in them. But on the contrary it is they, not we, who excell in acrimonious denunciations.

But if the worst that has been said of us were true, would it justify the unprecedented course of taking the control of the Seminary out of the hands of those who now control its destinies? Would it justify the unfair and revolutionary procedure of converting what is now a majority of the Board of Directors into a minority?

(23) Hartfore (Conn.) Times, December 26, 1925.
"Dr. Machen of the Princeton Theological Seminary, who is the real intellectual head of the persecutors, is far from ignorant and writes with an urbanity of manner far superior to that of the polemical controversialists opposed to him."

(24) A. Juelicher in Die Christliche Welt, August 17, 1922.
"Under this title, this esteemed theologian, who is well known in Germany as well as in his own country, has published a book . . . distinguished by its thoroughness and a dignified freedom from personalities in the treatment of his opponents." (Ausgezeichnet durch Grundlichkeit und vornehme Sachlichkeit in der Behandlung der Gegner)· Review of"Origin of Paul's Religion".

(25) "Every member of the faculty is absolutely loyal to the standards of our Church. The only division I have observed is as to spirit, methods or policies." Letter from Dr. Erdman in "Presbyterian Advance" Jan. 22, 1925.
"Here at Princeton we are all orthodox, and in this respect there is no division. The only difference is in method and spirit." Interview of Dr. Erdman in New York Times, April 6, 1925.

It will be said indeed that the members of the Board of Trustees are equally loyal with the Directors to the standards of the Church, and that no danger can be anticipated from fusing the two Boards. We have, of course, no desire to impugn the character of the members of the Board of Trustees; but if they be equally loyal with the Directors, that result is due to accident, rather than to safeguards imposed either by civil or (as in the case of the Directors) by ecclesiastical law. More than a majority -- twelve out of twenty-one -- of the Trustees are required by the charter to be laymen and citizens of that N.I. State. No member of the Board is required to be a minister or elder or even a member of the Presbyterian Church: a Roman Catholic, a Unitarian, A Jew, a Mohammedan or an atheist would be eligible as a Trustee. One of the present Trustees is a signer of the Auburn Affirmation, a document which declares that the Virgin Birth and the Bodily Resurrection of Christ are such trivial things that they may be believed or not by Presbyterian ministers as they choose; and his co-trustees have indicated that they do not disapprove such sentiments; for they have appointed that very trustee, a signer of the Auburn Affirmation, as one of their five representatives to confer with the Assembly's Committee for Reorganization of Princeton Seminary. Moreover, the sentiments of the Trustees on the matters which have divided the Faculty and the Directors are notorious. The treasurer of the Board of Trustees, Mr. W. P. Stevenson, testifying before the Thompson Committee said:-

"The Board of Trustees almost to a man stands behind the President. The Board of Directors do not stand behind him." (Report of Thompson Committee, Appx. p. 92).

Therefore, nobody can doubt that any merger of the Board of Trustees with the Board of Directors would result in converting the present majority of the Board of Directors, the only governing body which prescribes the policy of the Seminary, into a minority, and thus putting President Stevenson and his policies in complete and undisputed control. That result is the very object for which the merger is sought. The object is to take control of the Seminary out of the hands of those with whom it now resides, and transfer it to others.

Such a step would be drastic at any time. It is revolutionary at a time when the Faculty and the Directors are divided sharply on what the majority of both bodies regard as a principle of the most vital and fundamental kind.

The president is the appointee of the Board of Directors. His duty is to carry out their policies. He is subject to removal by them at pleasure, subject only to the right of the next succeeding General Assembly to reinstate him by vetoing his removal. Can any institution be properly run if insubordination in such an officer is to be encouraged? How is it possible to maintain harmony and a due respect to constituted authority if such an officer is to be rewarded for flaunting the authority of those who appointed him, whose orders he is subject to, and who may remove him at pleasure -- if such an officer, we say, is to be rewarded for insubordination by having the majority of

the Board of Directors converted at his behest into a minority?

If it were true, as supporters of President Stevenson so often reiterate, that the question is simply one of personalities and of methods, involving no difference of principle at all, why, then, has he not resigned? If the issue were in his view as in ours one of fundamental importance lying at the roots of Christianity, we can understand that he might feel it his duty, even at the risk of the peace of the Seminary, to continue to hold office and to struggle to the bitter end; but if the question on is only one of personalities and methods, why does he continue to oppose the majority? Why does he not resign, and let the majority rule on these matters of "personalities and methods"?

The deference which might otherwise be due to the Report of the Thompson Committee of Five, authorized by the Baltimore Assembly, is minimized by the circumstances under which the Committee was appointed, its personnel, the serious errors of fact into which it has fallen, and the illegal withholding of its contents from publication until the very eve of the meeting of the San Francisco Assembly. The Committee was appointed by Dr. W. O. Thompson, whose election as moderator had been vigorously advocated by President Stevenson and Dr. Erdman, and by the members generally of the minority within the Board of Directors and the Faculty, and with equal vigor opposed by most if not all of the members of the majority group both in the Faculty and in the Board of Directors. The Committee itself was a partisan

committee, whether designed so to be or not, on which those in thorough sympathy with the majority of the Directors and the majority of the Faculty had no representation. Dr. Thompson himself was ex officio chairman. Dr. Luccock, who as Dr. Thompson's appointee to the chairmanship of the Committee on Theological Seminaries of the Baltimore Assembly, had brought in the report advocating the appointment of the Committee and opposing the immediate confirmation of the election of Dr. Machen to the chair of Apologetics and Christian Ethics, was one of the members. On the other hand Dr. Thomas S. Dixon, who had brought in the minority report, was, in violation of precedent, accorded no place on the Committee. So far as known, not one single member of the Committee belonged to that large section of the Church which had opposed the candidacy of Dr. Thompson for the moderatorship.

The Report itself, as might have been expected, in view of the composition of the Committee, is a partisan report -- more partisan, however, than could have been anticipated. It is based on serious errors and misstatements of fact, some of which have been pointed out by others in the religious press and elsewhere, and which are too numerous to be here mentioned with particularity. Moreover, in violation of Standing Rule 29 of the General Assembly, which required the Report to be in the hands of the Stated Clerk by April 1st, it was withheld from him until May -- so that there was no time for consideration of it, which with its appendices is a bulky document of 186 printed

pages, before the meeting of the Assembly, either by the Commissioners or by the Church at large.

The moderator of the San Francisco Assembly was Dr. Robert E. Speer, himself a minority member of the Board of Directors. In his hands rested the quasi-judicial duty of appointing the six new members of the enlarged committee authorized by that Assembly. The majority of the enlarged Committee thus designated evidently regards itself as bound to provide for merging the Board of Trustees with the Board of Directors in such a way as to oust the present majority of the only governing body of the Seminary from control, and to put in power the present minority, irrespective of any consideration of the injustice or unwisdom of that course, and in spite of the fact that the mover of that resolution stated on the floor of the Assembly that the resolution was intended to permit the reopening of the whole question. Under such circumstances, it is a foregone conclusion that the enlarged Committee of eleven will report in favor of converting the present majority of the Board of Directors into a minority.

The Thompson Committee said in 1927. "The root and source of the serious difficulties at Princeton, and the greatest obstacle to the removal of these difficulties, seem to be in the plan of government by two boards."(26) Yet the same Report admits that the line of division extends to all the boards, even including the Board of Trustees. It declares:-

(26) Report p. 47.

"Certain fundamental differences have developed in the Board of Trustees. In other words, the spirit of division seems to have developed in practically every organization connected with the Seminary and this spirit of division has not always been tempered with the spirit of brotherly kindness and a charitable spirit toward colleagues in the service of the Seminary."(27)

If therefore the line of cleavage runs through both boards as well as the Faculty, how can "the root and source" of the division be the existence of two boards? But of course, the system of two boards, which has worked smoothly for over a century, with nothing more than an occasional minor difference, speedily ironed out by a conference, can not possibly be "the root and source" of difficulties which have arisen only since the coming of President Stevenson. The real object of the consolidation of the boards must be to take control out of the hands of the present majority of the Board of Directors.

If the merger should be effected, and members of the present majority should remain on the Faculty or on the new board, the same division of sentiment, the same irrepressible conflict, would continue. The only difference would be that what is now a majority would be a minority, and what is now a minority would be a majority. The strife would continue, with any existing bitterness multiplied a thousand fold by the injustice of putting a minority in control and by the conviction that Christ had been betrayed anew by his professed followers.

If on the other hand, members of the present majority in the Board of Directors should refuse, or be barred, from places in the new Board, there might be "peace" of a certain

(27) Report p. 17.

sort at Princeton. The Seminary, with more than half of its great faculty gone, would be left to drift quietly with the tide of modernism in the wake of Union and other "liberal" seminaries. But even at this price, the Church would not have purchased peace; for the burning embers would simply have been scattered, and the conflagration spread throughout the entire Church. Deprived of their Seminary, the Conservatives -- ultra-Conservatives, if you will -- would burn with the sense of injustice, and in many quarters the question would be asked, and possibly answered in the negative, whether they could conscientiously contribute to the work of a Church which had wrought such a stupendous wrong, or even continue in her communion.

The theoretical question whether "two boards" or "one board" is the better system is not involved. For ourselves, we prefer the present plan. We think that very different qualifications are required to handle the finances of a largely endowed institution from those which are required of men who are to regulate its spiritual and educational policies. Even if there were a merger of the boards, any wise board would place the finances in the hands of one sub-committee, and theological and educational matters in the hands of another. But be this as it may, no fair plan of reorganization would take the control of the spiritual destinies of the institution, at a time of sharp division of sentiment, out of the hands of those now in control.

What have we done to deserve such treatment? We have labored sincerely and without pay. We have borne the reproach of the Gospel. We have endured ridicule and abuse for maintaining the truth of the Scriptures. We have succeeded in maintaining an institution which, sound in theology and distinguished for learning, is the foremost exponent of the Christian Faith, as we and our fathers have understood it, in the whole world. Shall this great institution be jeopardized, its faculty disrupted, and its policies reversed? Shall its vast endowments be imperilled, and involved in protracted litigation in the civil courts? We beseech you not to lay hands upon the delicate mechanism of this lamp of truth in a world of darkness.

It is vain to deceive ourselves by an easy-going optimism, or to repeat in parrot-like fashion that the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. is sound to the core. We do indeed trust that it is sound <u>at</u> the core. But, as the Confession of Faith teaches, "the purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error"; and, alas, our own is no exception to this rule. Some 1300 of its ministers have subscribed to the Auburn Affirmation which announces that some of its signers do while others do not believe the fundamental facts of history on which Christianity is based, and that all of them regard belief in such facts as matters of indifference. Only the blind or the perverse can say that such a Church is <u>sound throughout.</u>

At the time of the Briggs Case, the issue was whether a man could remain in the Presbyterian ministry who taught that the Bible contains errors of history and of fact. At the time of the Gantz Case, the issue was whether a modernist who denies or doubts the miraculous birth of Christ could be admitted to the ministry. At the time of the Fosdick Case, the issue was whether a minister of another denomination could regularly occupy a Presbyterian pulpit to proclaim his denial of Christian doctrine. But now for the first time, the issue is whether men are to be driven from the Church or her Seminaries, for no other fault than zeal -- excess of zeal, if you will -- in defense of the faith.

If the General Assembly by depriving the present majority of the Directors of control of this Seminary because they, or the faculty they have chosen and support, have been guilty of excess of zeal for the purity of the faith, then indeed you proclaim to all the world that while the Presbyterian Church in her capacious bosom can embrace Auburn Affirmationists and other modernists, it has no place for those who dare to fight for the faith of their fathers.

We, therefore, appeal to you, to leave the control of Princeton Seminary where it now rests.

MAITLAND ALEXANDER
1008 PROFESSIONAL BUILDING
429 PENN AVENUE
PITTSBURGH, PA.

January 11, 1928

Rev. William Courtland Robinson, D. D.

Delhi, New York

Dear Court:

I inclose you a brief which I have had prepared stating the position of the majority of the Board of Directors of Princeton on the issue as raised by the report of the Thompson Committee, and the action of the General Assembly of 1927. There has been a good deal of criticism regarding the attitude of the majority of the Board in making no defense of their position. This paper may need some slight revision and any suggestions which you have to make, I will gladly receive. If, on the whole, you think it as good as I do, will you signify to me that you will be willing to sign it and have it published. It lays the foundation for any subsequent action which we may find necessary to make.

The time has come, I believe, when we must make our position clear and public.

Very sincerely yours,

Maitland Alexander

MA/WM

P.S. Julian has just come in and says he will be out at Lower Merion Friday. That's all right. So only Saturday. →

MRS. JULIAN ALEXANDER
3417 RACE STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Dear Dr. Robinson:-

I am so glad we are all going to see you and hear you preach. Amelia says that you are planning to stay at her house. I am writing before you come down to get hold of you and Mrs. Robinson for dinner Saturday night Oct. 14 or Friday Oct. 13 if you are planning to

come that early. Unfortunately Julian has something on hand at dinner time both Monday and Wednesday and of course the wedding is Tues. I do hope we are not too late to get hold of you for the end of this week. It will be a great disappointment to us if you can't sup with us at all.

With much pleasure at the thought of seeing you soon,

Ever, Virginia H. Alexander.

EASTMAN SCHOOL
OF MUSIC

130 University Ave. Dorm. B
Rochester, New York

Dear Doctor and Mrs. Robinson,

Here I am at last thru your help and Stewart and Annie's. I asked Grandfather to find out their address in Lockport but I guess he forgot to inquire.

I love it here. It is very home-like and pleasant. The girls are very friendly. Every evening after dinner we dance and sometimes play bridge. At eight-thirty a little buzzer lets us know that we have to go upstairs. At ten it buzzes again. That's for every girl to be in her own room. They drop a lot of girls every year now, the standard keeps rising. I think that Anna, a friend of mine who came here, told me that eighty girls were dropped last year.

I had my audition last Wednesday. It came out very nicely, much better than I expected.

I guess this will be all for now; must write to the family.

Most sincerely,

Edict

Delhi, N. Y.
February 8, 1928.

Rev. Maitland Alexander, D.D.
P. O. Box 520,
Palm Beach, Fla.

Dear Maitland,

Yours just received. As you know, I wrote one of my own which Laird said you advised against sending through the Church. I have great respect for your opinion. However, with approval of Craig, Laird, McEwan, I have ten thousand printed and they will be sent to ministers this week. Inglis met me and said he and Crane approved. Craig reports Robert Dick Wilson as approving. I will send it with my name attached. The two are so different in tone and spirit that I do not see how I can sign both. Stevenson was very angry at mine. I judge Machen does not approve but Laird telegraphed me "Send out pamphlets. Favorable reports everywhere." We cover much of the same matter, but in a different way. We must win those who say we are narrow, bigoted, intolerant etc. I do not believe your pamphlet will do it. As one said "It will please those on your side but antagonize opponents and neutrals". Another wrote me that "with so many testimonies you cannot convince Assembly that Stevenson-Erdman party are as bad as majority assert".

In detail, I do not approve naming Erdman, Loetscher and Smith as Stevenson supporters (page 4). Erdman will break from him when he can and Loetscher is no admirer of Stevenson. Let us hold them by refusing to recognize their defection. Page 5 you tell of our victory in 1924 but show how we have been defeated ever since.

I do not admit and will not sign a statement (page 7) that we have not exercised "Christian Charity" which is simply pleading guilty to the Chief charge against us. Dr. Warfield writes me that his greatest burden comes from abuse of the committee by our side. He wrote very frankly that we were killing our own cause. You must remember that our side moved that Thompson be Chairman. It gets nowhere to talk about failure to put on Dickson. There are words and hints ("parrot-like fashion", page 16) which will lose votes and votes are what we are seeking. Now I think you are correct in all you say but in my opinion it will hurt not help that which we wish to gain. Craig, Laird, Inglis expressed the same opinion. They may sign but they have doubts.

Stevenson-Erdman, while under-dogs, were suave and smooth and showed claws only when on top. In my opinion we being under-dogs just now get no gain by vicious attacks. As to Stevenson's resignation, we never asked him to resign even when Faculty wished us to

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and now he is on top we are ridiculous in asking him to resign for the good of the cause. We dared not ask him when we were victorious lest we make him martyr. Everybody will laugh at us if we put forth this sickly plea now he has us under him.

Finally you as well as Macartney and Machen overestimate the importance of the theological issue in the minds of ministers and elders. I heard Macartney say that he could defeat Erdman at Columbus by a great theological issue. He did do pretty well but lost. In my opinion fighting Erdman at Columbus was the worst blunder in the whole proceeding. Men outside our group believe Stevenson and Erdman are as orthodox as the rest of us.

It may be conceited but I think if you read mine carefully you will conclude that it will win more votes than yours. I am with your purpose heartily but I doubt the spirit and method of this pamphlet. I do not see how I can sign both. Whatever we do let the Princeton majority stick together in spirit. If you get signers enough, send out yours, I will be with you, though my name is not there.

Let us not lose by proving, what they charge, that we are a vicious, hatefilled bunch. Of course Stevenson and Erdman are more so and I make it plain but we must not show too much viciousness in proving it. Await the re-action on mine before sending yours.

Cordially yours,

W C Robinson